

# REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

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Tuesday, December 23. 1707.

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**I** Am upon proving, that we may have such a Union among our selves in England, as may make us a happy People, tho' we have not a Union of Principles.

I have already noted, that a Union of Principles is not to be expected ; that, speaking in the Language of our Circumstances in this Nation, it is not possible, and I am sometimes wondering, what Way the Gentleman that talks of it can propose it : I say it again, *I express it with Regret*, an Union of Principles in this Nation is impossible, and it would be hard for any Man to propose a rational Scheme how to bring it to pass, the Method call'd *the shortest Way* excepted, of which I have spoken already ; all other Schemes, that ever I have heard of, are absurd and ridiculous.

Since then it is impossible to produce this Union of Principles, it remains to examine, what must supply the Felicity that supplies us with ; I have laid it down as a Maxim,

'That Safety and Peace compleat the publick Happiness of a Nation, and I am upon proving, that both these may be obtain'd without a Union of Principles.

As to Safety, I have prov'd in the last Review, that we have it in its highest human Perfection, and far beyond any Nation in the World, and that all our Difference in Principles does not at all affect it ; I come now to shew, that we may have Peace in the same Perfection, notwithstanding all our Difference in Principles ; pardon me, Gentlemen of the *High Party*, *I do not say we have it*, I wish, however mortifying it might be to you, I could say *we have it*, but I say we may have it ; and were it not for your publick Opposition to this blessed healing Article, I believe, we might soon say *we have it*.

Look ye to it, ye Dividers in *Israel*, who can reserve no Charity, no Peace, no Society, with those whose Principles do not come

come up to all your Extravagancies, who cannot jump with all your Opinions, and joyn Hands in all your Confederacies! with what vain Pretences do you cloath your Standing off from your Brethren, and exclude them from the Happiness of the Community, because they cannot just believe as you believe? —Can nothing but a Union of Principles make us happy? Wretched Britains! what Misery is our Lot, who can never agree in Principles, and therefore must for ever be miserable in all other things.

Is there no Neighbourhood, no Society, no Commerce, no Charity, for Want of an entire Correspondence of Principles? If this be *High-Church* Charity, I recommend the Gentlemen to the character given of that blessed thing call'd Charity in the sacred Text, and see how they correspond: I do confess, this Spirit rages too much among the Party, and if I were to tell you of a Knot of the *High-Clergy*, that in the Town where they live, refuse to buy or sell with the *Dissenters*, and how they forbid one of their Servants buying Malt of a *Dissenter*, because they could not bear to drink Ale brewed with *Presbyterian* Malt: I say, if I were to tell this Tale, and I could make merry with a great many such, Posterity would blush for this Generation, and be ashamed to own their Principles, tho' they were to espouse the Party.

Besides, Gentlemen of the *High-Party*, I would in a friendly Manner advise you to be very cautious, how you forbid Commerce with the *Whigs*, and the Reason is plain, viz. Lest they do the like, and you be quite undone; for without doubt they have the Advantage there, so much as will turn the whole Scale of Trade in the Nation, and I have often made bold to give you some Hints of this; should differing Principles descend to Trade, should the *Whigs* and *Dissenters* be obliged to come over to you, or not trade with you — That you would not buy nor sell with them; this would be a sad Persecution indeed, and you would be very cruel to them.

But harkye, Gentlemen, consider what you do, and if you love your own Friends, and would not ruin your own Party, quite ruin them: Do not put this new Whymsie into their Heads, for if it should become a Practice, you would be undone, if instead of not buying *Presbyterian* Malt or *Whiggish*

Ale — They should refuse to let your Poor have any *Presbyterian* Work; that your Ships should get no *Whiggish* Freight, no *Presbyterian* Bale, that your Companies should have no *Whiggish* Stock, your Banks no *Presbyterian* Cash, that in our manufacturing Towns the *Dissenters* should refuse to employ any of your People, or to buy or sell with any but such as were *Dissenters*, or such as were guilty of the unpardonable Sin of Moderation. What do you think, Gentlemen, could the *High-Church* stand by her self in such Cases or no? Would she support her own People, or maintain her own Poor? Or how long do you think they would be a Party? — Upon my Word, Gentlemen *Tories*, you need not talk of *Presbyterian* Malt, you would soon have no Malt at all, nor little else — And whenever you please to petition the Parliament, that an Act of Separation be made, that the *High-Church* Party, who according to Mr. Dodwell is the only true Church of *England*, should not trade, buy nor sell with the *Low-Church* Schismatics, for such they count them, nor with the *Dissenting* Schismatics; My Word for it, they all give their Vote for it, and you shall have such a Separation by Consent; and assure your selves, whenever that is done, your own Poor will mob you, and pull your Houses down for Want of Bread, and tell you to your Faces, you have starved them by your Madness.

The Result of this Discourse is, I think a very plain Story, viz. That our Principles have no Manner of Concern in our civil Peace, why may we not brew the same Malt, and drink the same Ale, and sit at the same Table, and enjoy all Sorts of Sociable and Gentleman-like Familiarity, and not be always comparing our Creeds, or capping Principles; our Opinions in Religion are not at all absolutely necessary Ingredients in our civil Peace; we may be Comrades and Neighbours, we may be Partners in Trade, in Offices, nay in Beds, and not all of a Sortment, either in our Religious or in our Politick Opinions.

Nay, let me carry it farther, we may go to Heaven without a Union of Principles; *The Unity of the Spirit* is formed in the *Bond of Peace*, not of Parties; and this Unity of the Spirit may be found without a Union of Principles. It may indeed be enquir'd here, what we mean by Principles, and let the Author

thor of the *Rebeasal* explain it for himself, I shall not treat him, as he does me and others, *a la mode de Inuendo*. But let him explain it which Way he pleases, 'tis against him here.

If he means by Principles, the Fundamental Doctrines of the Christian Religion absolutely necessary to Salvation, without Agreement in which a Man cannot be a Christian; then he has been saying Nothing, for in that we have the Union he speaks of, and there we absolutely agree; he will not say, a Dissenter from Episcopacy cannot go to Heaven, or is not a Christian.

If he means by Principles, the Points in Debate between the *Church* and the *Dissenters*, then I say, he is infinitely erroneous; and to say we cannot be happy without a Union in these Principles, must be false; because we may have a publick Peace without it, and as before Safety and Peace most certainly denominate National Happiness, or it would be very hard to tell us, when a Nation is in a happy Condition.

If then we may have Safety, if we may have Peace, nay, if we may go to Heaven without this Union of Principles, as I think, is evident from what has been said, and more might be said if it were not; it remains for Mr. *Rebeasal* to shew us, what there is in the Differences between us, which makes it impossible for us to be happy, or wherein our Happiness is deficient; and would he do this fairly and ingeuously, I am perswaded, it would be easie to make it appear, that our Want of Happiness does not consist in our disunited Principles, so much as in our disuniting Tempers; not so much in our differing in Opinion, as in our Opinionate differing; not in our contending Principles, as in our Principle of Contention; and were this Delighting to be taken away, our differing Principles would no Way interrupt our Happiness, either National or Personal: And so much to that absurd Doctrine, That we can have no Happiness in *England* without a Union of Principles.

## MISCELLANEA.

I have in this Part of this Paper examin'd a little, what has been the Obstruction to the Prosperity of our Plantations, and have hinted at the great Reason of it, Viz. A Jealousie of their being too great, and the senseless Notion of their setting up an Independency of their own Circumstances, and breaking off from *England*.

I am now to prove, that the promoting the Encrease of our Plantations in *America* is the directest Way effectually to remove the very Foundation for that Jealousie, if it ever had any Foundation, other than the Abiudicities of the Party. I say, I shall prove, that to make them great, rich, populous and powerful, is the only, or at least most effectual Way to make their Independency for ever impossible, and to put them out of all Fear of such a State; nay, tho' it were allow'd to be the Desire, or Inclination, or Design, call it which you please, of the People there, which was never yet proved, nor reasonably suggested.

I'll state the Case for *New England*, not only in Behalf of the rest, but because

*N. England* is the Colony, which our State Heroes, who were frighted at Vapours, thought most formidable; first, because they were too honest to be suffer'd to grow great; and secondly, because they were damn'd Phanaticks, who at that Time of Day they thought it necessary to suppress and discourage.

The Proposal for *N. England*, and on which such an Article of Prosperity both to them and us depended, as that Age must be rendred infamous that ever oppose, is as follows.

That *N. England*, being infinitely fuller and better furnish'd with all Sorts of Deals, Timber, Mats, Plank, &c. and all Kinds of Naval Stores, than even *Norway* it self, and perhaps with Iron and Copper as much as *Sweden*, and that if Encouragements were given, these things could be furnish'd as cheap as in *Norway*, and that nothing could prevent their coming so cheap to *England* as from *Norway*, but the meer Difference of Freight; a Proposal might be made for the Advantage and Encouragement of

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